

SAN DIEGO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES-FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

SUMMARY

The 2008/ 2009 San Diego County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) inspected all detention facilities within the County of San Diego (County), as mandated by the California Penal Code (PC) §919(b). During the course of the inspections, the Grand Jury found that the policies and procedures for the San Diego County Department General Services (DGS) do not adequately address facilities maintenance issues at the various sites, and that employees are generally unaware of the policies and procedures, even though there is an existing training protocol covering these topics. Facilities maintenance procedures are further hampered in the San Diego County Probation Department (Probation Department) by the inability of its managers to access vital financial and operational information about their respective facilities.

The Grand Jury concluded that DGS needs to: 1) improve its employee training procedures; 2) develop policies that are site specific for performing routine maintenance and responding to maintenance emergencies; and 3) take steps to ensure the free flow of maintenance-related information throughout the department.

The Grand Jury observed that maintenance performed at facilities operated by the San Diego County Sheriff's Department (Sheriff's Department) was superior to that performed at facilities operated by the Probation Department. The Grand Jury recommends that the Probation Department: 1) investigate the possibility of entering into a maintenance agreement with the DGS that mirrors the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) utilized by the Sheriff's Department, and 2) correct maintenance problems in the shower/bathroom areas at the juvenile facilities at the Juvenile Ranch Facility and Camp Barrett.

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

During its tenure, the Grand Jury is charged with inspecting the conditions and management of all County detention facilities. While inspecting those detention facilities the Grand Jury found that there is a disparity in the caliber of maintenance performed at facilities operated by the Sheriff's Department and those operated by the Probation Department. Maintenance performed for the Sheriff's Department appears to be accomplished with fewer delays and a higher quality of workmanship than maintenance performed on facilities operated by the Probation Department.

Once the above-mentioned disparity was observed the Grand Jury directed its attention to the maintenance operations within the County through site and building inspections, testimony of County employees who occupy positions in labor, first line supervision and management, and archival research relative to work orders, bids, and department policies and procedures. Additionally, the Grand Jury evaluated employee training and its effectiveness.

PROCEDURES

In the course of this investigation, the Grand Jury:

- Conducted interviews with employees of DGS ranging from Building Maintenance Engineers to senior members of management staff;
- Conducted interviews with employees of the Sheriff's Department and the Probation Department;
- Visited numerous sites in search of written policies and manuals relating directly to building maintenance and operations; and
- Reviewed files containing work orders, bids and other reports.

DISCUSSION

DGS is primarily an internal service department within the County. DGS ensures that other County departments have the necessary workspaces, services and vehicles to accomplish their business objectives. These services range from real estate leasing and acquisition support to capital improvement and architectural planning; from facility maintenance and repair services to security management; and from vehicle acquisition and maintenance to refueling services.

The Facilities Operations Division (Facilities Operations) of DGS is the behind-the-scenes action team providing building maintenance, repair, and contract support services to County facilities. These services include performance of preventive maintenance on essential building systems, time critical response to emergency repairs, accomplishment of unscheduled maintenance services, compliance and service quality oversight for contract support, and physical security/guard services at select County facilities. Facilities Operations has responsibility for approximately 6.5 million square feet of County property which includes facility support to the Sheriff, the courts, the District Attorney, the Health and Human Services Agency, the Registrar of Voters, the Tax Assessor, various administrative offices and much more. Facilities Operations ensures that County residents, as well as County employees, benefit from a safe, healthy, and functional business environment.

The County encompasses an area of 4,261 square miles and for maintenance purposes is divided into three Regions containing 13 Zones. The Facilities Operations Chief (FOC) oversees day-to-day maintenance operations and is responsible for a staff of 172 employees. Each region is managed by a Facilities Support Manager (FSM) reporting directly to the FOC. The FSMs direct the functions of the Facilities Operations staff within their zones in coordination with a zone Building Maintenance Supervisor (BMS). The BMS is the front line supervisor leading a staff of maintenance professionals consisting of building maintenance engineers, carpenters, electricians, electronic security technicians, masons, painters, plumbers, and welders assigned to specific facilities.

The Grand Jury undertook this investigation after it observed during a required visit to the Kearney Mesa Juvenile Facility, Juvenile Ranch Facility, and Camp Barrett Juvenile facility that some maintenance work orders were not properly completed. Specifically, a number of work orders indicated completion dates that preceded the date the problem to be addressed was discovered and assigned. The usefulness of work orders is substantially diminished when the information recorded on them is inaccurate. The Grand Jury also

noted that modesty panels were not installed in showers and bathrooms at Camp Barrett and Juvenile Ranch Facility. Further, the Grand Jury observed mold in the shower area and bathrooms at the Juvenile Ranch Facility, as well as standing water in the shower area.

In the course of its study of these problems, the Grand Jury identified the general policies and administrative regulations governing DGS operations as a whole. They are available to County employees on the San Diego County Intranet. However, these policies and procedures are extremely limited in scope, are very difficult to access, and are lacking in specificity pertaining to maintenance requirements for individual sites.

Almost all of the employees interviewed by the Grand Jury, including those who occupy management positions, indicated that information relative to specific sites and procedures unique to those sites is handed down orally to employees, utilizing one-on-one communications in which an experienced employee verbally imparts important information to a less experienced employee.

Training in both job-related skills and policies and procedures occurs. However, interviews with employees revealed that many were unable to remember what training they had received, or how that training related to the performance of their jobs. As a result, the effectiveness of the training appears questionable. Grand Jury interviews with employees and supervisors confirm the conclusion that even if adequate policies and procedures do exist, most employees are unaware of them.

With respect to the Probation Department, the Grand Jury determined that information is sometimes so rigidly compartmentalized within the Department that responsible managers do not have access to operational and financial information essential to managing the facility. For instance, testimony of knowledgeable witnesses indicated that Probation Department facility managers are frequently unable to determine how much money is being spent at the facility they manage or how much money is in the maintenance budget, because that information is tightly held by others. Without this information, managers are effectively blocked from making sound management decisions.

Based on Grand Jury interviews of DGS employees, many employees are not proficient in the use of computer systems related to their job duties. Because the use of computers and the ability to access computerized maintenance schedules and records are essential parts of DGS maintenance procedures, this deficiency could lead to significant employee performance problems. Some supervisory personnel indicated to the Grand Jury that they frequently correct computer-related errors made by their subordinates.

FACTS AND FINDINGS

Fact: Training on policies and procedures is conducted by DGS for all personnel.

Fact: The County's general policies and procedures for DGS are posted on the County-operated Intranet, which is available to DGS personnel.

Fact: DGS personnel at individual sites could not provide or identify generic or specific policies regarding their site.

Finding #01: Training of DGS personnel on policies and procedures is ineffective.

Fact: The policies and procedures for DGS are generic in content and not site specific.

Fact: Information relative to the maintenance of specific sites and procedures unique to those sites is handed down verbally by experienced employees to less experienced employees.

Finding #02: There are no written maintenance policies and procedures that apply to varying conditions at the County's detention facilities.

Fact: The Sheriff's Department has a Memorandum of Understanding with DGS for the performance of maintenance at facilities operated by the Sheriff's Department.

Fact: The Probation Department has a Service Level Agreement with DGS for performance of maintenance at facilities operated by the Probation Department.

Finding #03: Site inspections and testimony from knowledgeable witnesses indicate that the level of maintenance at Sheriff's Department facilities is superior to the level of maintenance at Probation Department facilities.

Finding #04: The content of the agreements between DGS and the Sheriff's Department and the Probation Department appears to affect the performance of maintenance at their respective detention facilities.

Fact: Managers and supervisors in the Probation Department are not given access to information regarding funds available for maintenance at the facilities for which they are responsible.

Finding #05: The free flow of information regarding financial and operational issues is essential to good management of County facilities.

Fact: The operation of computers is an essential part of DGS maintenance procedures.

Fact: Many DGS employees are not proficient in the use of computer systems related to their job duties.

Fact: DGS employees are required to utilize computers for the purpose of completing work orders.

Finding #06: Many DGS personnel are inadequately trained in the use of computers.

Fact: There are no modesty panels in the shower facilities of the Juvenile Ranch Facility and the Camp Barrett Juvenile Facility.

Fact: Modesty panels are installed in other juvenile detention facilities operated by the County.

Finding #07: The shower facilities at the Juvenile Ranch Facility and Camp Barrett Juvenile facility do not meet privacy standards present at other County Juvenile facilities.

Fact: Mold and standing water were discovered in the shower area of the Juvenile Ranch Facility.

Finding #08: The condition of the shower area at the Juvenile Ranch Facility is potentially a health hazard to wards and employees at the facility.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2008/2009 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Department of General Services:

- 09-20:** Create and adopt policies and procedures that are site specific relative to maintenance and make them easily available to every departmental employee.
- 09-21:** Review the existing training protocol within DGS to determine its adequacy in educating employees regarding the policies and procedures pertaining to their responsibilities, and revise the training if necessary.
- 09-22:** Systematically retrain employees until they can correctly fill out a work order on a computer.

The 2008/2009 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the San Diego County Probation Department:

- 09-23:** Consider entering into a maintenance agreement with DGS that duplicates as closely as possible the Memorandum of Understanding the Sheriff's Department has in effect.
- 09-24:** Adopt a written policy that ensures the free flow of information up and down the chain of command, and conduct random performance audits to verify that it has been implemented and is working effectively.
- 09-25:** Install modesty panels in the shower facilities of the Juvenile Ranch Facility and the Camp Barrett Juvenile Facility.
- 09-26:** Eliminate mold in the shower area at the Juvenile Ranch Facility and address the root cause of standing water and repair drains that do not work properly.

REQUIREMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS

The California Penal Code §933(c) requires any public agency which the Grand Jury has reviewed, and about which it has issued a final report, to comment to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court on the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of the agency. Such comment shall be made *no later than 90 days* after the Grand Jury publishes its report (filed with the Clerk of the Court); except that in the case of a report containing findings and recommendations pertaining to a department or agency headed by an elected County official (e.g. District Attorney, Sheriff, etc.), such comment shall be made *within 60 days* to the Presiding Judge with an information copy sent to the Board of Supervisors.

Furthermore, California Penal Code §933.05(a), (b), (c), details, as follows, the manner in which such comment(s) are to be made:

- (a) As to each grand jury finding, the responding person or entity shall indicate one of the following:
 - (1) The respondent agrees with the finding
 - (2) The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the finding, in which case the response shall specify the portion of the finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons therefor.
- (b) As to each grand jury recommendation, the responding person or entity shall report one of the following actions:
 - (1) The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action.
 - (2) The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a time frame for implementation.
 - (3) The recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a time frame for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or head of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This time frame shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.
 - (4) The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation therefor.
- (c) If a finding or recommendation of the grand jury addresses budgetary or personnel matters of a county agency or department headed by an elected officer, both the agency or department head and the Board of Supervisors shall respond if requested by the grand jury, but the response of the Board of Supervisors shall address only those budgetary or personnel matters over which it has some decision making authority. The response of the elected agency or department head shall address all aspects of the findings or recommendations affecting his or her agency or department.

Comments to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court in compliance with the Penal Code §933.05 are required from the:

<u>Responding Agency</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Date</u>
San Diego County General Services Department	09-20 through 09-22	8/17/09
San Diego County Probation Department	09-23 through 09-26	8/17/09